

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

Awakened India



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.

No. 123, OCTOBER 1906

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MAYAVATI :

Kumaon, (Himalayas).

Berlin : PROF. PAUL ZILMANN, GROSS LICHTERFELDE 3, CARLSTR. 3.

New York : S. E. WALDO, 219 MONROE STREET, BROOKLYN.

London : E. HAMMOND, 18 TOTHILL STREET, WESTMINSTER.

Indian annually :

Rs. 1-8.

Single copy As. 3.

1906

Foreign annually

4s. or \$ 1.

Single copy 4d. or 8 cents.

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Arise! Awake! and stop not till the goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda

VOL. XI]

OCTOBER 1906

[No. 122

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

FAITH—II

A MAN wanted to cross a river. A sage gave him an amulet and said, 'This will carry you across.' The man, taking it in his hand, began to walk over the water. Before he had gone half the way he was seized with curiosity, and opened the amulet to see what was in it. Therein he found, written on a piece of paper the sacred name of Rama (Lord). The man at this said deprecatingly, 'Can this be the only secret?' No sooner had this scepticism entered his mind than he sank down. It is faith in the name of the Lord that works wonders, for faith is life and doubt is death.

A KING guilty of a mortal sin went to the hermitage of a sage to learn what penance he must perform in order to be purified. The sage was absent from home, but his son was there. The son hearing the case of the king said, "Repeat the name of God (Rama) thrice and your sin will be expiated." When the sage came back and heard of the penance prescribed by his son, he indignantly replied, "Sins committed in myriads of births are purged immediately by uttering the name of the Almighty but once; how weak must be thy faith, my son, since thou hast ordered the holy name to be repeated thrice!"

IF thou hast faith thou shalt attain to that for which thou longest.

BOIL your sugar well in a living and active fire. As long as there is earth and impurity in it, the sweet infusion will smoke and simmer. But when all impurity is cast out, there is neither smoke nor sound; the delicious crystalline fluid in its unmixed worth, whether liquid or solid, is the delight of men and gods. Such is the character of the man of faith.

TO KILL another, swords and shields are needed, whilst to kill one's own self even a pin will do; so to teach others one must study many scriptures and sciences, whilst to acquire self-illumination firm faith in a single motto will suffice.

BHAGAVAN Sri Ramachandra had to bridge the ocean before he could cross over to Lanka (Ceylon). But Hanuman, his faithful monkey-servant, with one jump crossed the ocean through the firmness of his faith in Rama. Here the servant achieved more than the master, simply through faith.

PRAY to the Divine Mother begging Her to bless you with the love that knows no inconstancy and that adamant faith which cannot be shaken.

OCCASIONAL NOTES

INDIA is evolving a new civilisation. New ideals and new methods have already made their appearance. Already she is projecting herself upon new developments in many different directions. The great danger of such an era is the loss of moral stability which it is apt to involve. For the aim and effort of civilisation is always to maintain the supremacy of the moral faculty. And in periods of violent transition, the tendency is, by the breaking of old bonds and associations, to make the moral scum and wreckage of society come to the surface, and take the lead. The word 'civilisation' is thus a Western equivalent for our word 'Dharma' or 'national righteousness,' as Sister Nivedita interprets it, and a nation may be regarded as having proved the value of its past, only when character has always been reckoned by it as the first of political and social assets, when the hypocrite has always been rated by it at his true value, and when the will of the people has spontaneously known to pursue good and avoid evil, all the days of its life.

No people can boast that they have shown these characteristics to perfection. This is obviously a race in which success is only of relative measurement. Yet the fact remains that if there could be an absolute standard for the appraisal of national and social systems it would be in terms of morality,—not in those of wealth or industry or even of happiness,—that that perfection must be expressed.

Morality is not to be understood here, as the morality of social habit merely. The keeping of a time-worn law may depend upon our weakness quite as much as on our strength. The cooking-pot is not the best Brâhman,

as the Swami Vivekananda pointed out. True morality is a fire of will, of purity, of character of sacrifice. It is here, and not to the expression, that we must look, to make the valuation of a nation's attainment. Yet some things are clear. When countries that have long preached a religion of renunciation,—a religion of the poor and lowly, of self-denial, of common property, of brotherly love,—when such countries are found suddenly to have abandoned themselves to the practice of exploitation—political, commercial, financial, or all three at once,—then we see a discrepancy between theory and practice, on which we can and ought to pass a judgment.

It is clear that a sound and true doctrine is not weapon enough for the will of man, in the hour of a great temptation. Besides that of the truth or untruth of the doctrine held, there is also the deeper question to be considered of how far the nature of the man has been saturated with it, how far he has bent to it, how far he has assimilated it. Unless a nation be literally sodden with its religion, it is bound, when the opportunity comes, to throw it away, in favour of self-interest. *And this is the defeat of civilisation* This is the true bar-sinister on the scutcheon of history.

At this point, however, comes in the question of the intellectual limitations of different faiths. Clearly, a code of religion and ethics which commands the ungrudging assent of our whole intellect, will restrain and impel us more effectually than one that we are driven to regard as more or less an old wives' tale. Here we see the importance of a religion that is not discredited. And here also we find the

secret of the failure of Christianity in the nineteenth century. Science, by dint of her mechanical inventions, has created a new world for Christian peoples to dwell in. Alas, that same science has also led to the scorning of the very Christianity which had been the great guiding and ennobling force in the world as they already knew it, and a Christian without his Christianity is apt to be an armed dacoit.

—

Christianity was not strong enough to include science. Is Hinduism strong enough to include the modern civilisation?

—

We answer yes! For towering behind the habits and practices of Hinduism lies that great generalised philosophy of the Vedanta, to which any religious ritual, any social scheme would serve equally well as area of illustration and experimental school. And from amidst the Vedanta itself again, rises the *Advaita* of Sankaracharya as the peak of Gouri Shankar crowns the long range of the Himalayas.

—

We are about to throw ourselves forward upon a great secularity. As a new development of Hinduism, in future is to stand the Indian Nation. Instead of the *Samaj* and orthodoxy, the civic life. Instead of new worships and triumphant religious austerities, we are buckling on our armour to-day for the battle-field of learning, of co-operation, of self-organisation. But what of that? Can the foundations of the *Sanaian Dharma* be shaken thereby? No, for have we not long ago been told "*Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti.*" All that exists is ONE. Learned men but call it by different names.

He whom once we worshipped as Gopala, comes to us now in the guise of the Mother. He on Whose feet, as Narayana, we threw flowers, calls on us now to offer lives and deaths instead.

Does it matter that instead of ringing the temple-bells at evening, we are to turn now to revive a dying industry? Does it matter that instead of altars we are to build factories and universities? Does it matter that instead of 'slaves of the Brahmins' we are in future to write ourselves down as 'slaves of the Motherland'? Does it matter that instead of offering worship, we are to turn henceforth with gifts of patient service, of food, of training, of knowledge, to those who are in sore need?

—

If 'All that exists is One,' then all paths alike are paths to that Oneness. Fighting is worship as good as praying. Labour is offering as acceptable as Ganges water. Study is austerity more costly and more precious than a fast. Mutual aid is better than any *pujan*. For concentration is the only means of vision—The One, the only goal.

—

O man, whosoever thou art, who goest forth to work, in this hour of the nation's need, clasp to thy heart the weapon of thy service. Let mind and body be one in the act of labour, every muscle hard-knit, every sinew tense. Let all thy faculties converge on embracing the task. Let thy thought, day and night, be on that which thou hast taken in hand to do. Let *character* be thy supreme guide, perfection of service thy one dream. So shall there come an hour of knowledge. And the new age shall have added to the children of the Motherland the race of the saints of the market-place and the field, the heroes of the civic and the national life.

—

THE time is ripe, ay! rotten-ripe, for change:
Then let it come: I have no dread of what
Is called for by the instinct of mankind:
Nor think I that God's world will fall apart
Because we tear a parchment more or less.

J. R. LOWELL.

SELECTION FROM SANSKRIT :

THE FOUR STAGES OF LIFE.

For this month's Sanskrit selection, we choose the following slokas on the four Ashramas from the 8th chapter of the Brahmānda Purāna. They are respectively as all know, (1) *Brahmacharya*, the student life in the home, and under the guidance of the Guru, (2) *Gārhasthya*, the life of the householder, (3) *Vānaprasthya*, the life of the anchorite or hermit, and (4) *Sannyāsa*, the life of renunciation. From the following it will be seen how a Hindu's whole life is a long rigid preparation,—one stage gently but steadily leading to the other, and thus helping through the purification of the mind-stuff to reach the highest goal of existence.—Ed.]

TRANSLATION

दाराग्रयोऽथातिथेयईज्याश्राद्धक्रियाः प्रजाः ।
ईत्येष वै गृहस्थस्य समासाद्धर्मसंग्रहः ॥

Briefly stated, the duties of the householder consist in marriage, tending the sacred fire, hospitable entertainment of guests, performance of sacrifices, or devotional acts, observing ceremonies in honour of the departed relatives and the perpetuation of the species.

दण्डी च मेखली चैव शङ्खशायी तथा जटी ।
गुरुशुश्रुषणं भैक्ष्यं विद्याद्वै ब्रह्मचारिणः ॥

Know these to be the duties of the *Brahmacharin*,—bearing the staff given at the investiture of the sacred thread, wearing the triple girdle (used by the three castes), sleeping on the ground, keeping matted hair, serving the Guru and living on alms.

चीरपत्राजिनानि स्युर्धान्यमूलफलौषधम् ।
उभे सन्ध्येऽवगाहश्च होमश्चारण्यवासिनाम् ॥

The duties of the anchorite are wearing either a strip of cloth, leaves or deer-skin, living on grains, fruits, roots and herbs, bathing twice daily,—morning and evening, and offering oblations (*Homa*).

आसनं वसने भैक्ष्यमस्तेयं शौचमेव च ।
अप्रमादोऽव्यवायश्च दया भूतेषु च क्षमा ।
अक्रोधो गुरु-शुश्रुषा सत्यञ्च दयमं स्मृतम् ॥

The practice of *Asanas* (Yoga postures), accepting alms in a cloth, cleanliness, lack of covetousness, freedom from distraction of mind, continence, compassion and forgiveness to all beings, absence of anger, devoted service to the Guru and following the truth;—these ten are the duties of the *Sannyāsin*.

दशलक्षणको ह्येष धर्मैः प्रोक्तः स्वयम्भुवा ।
भित्तोर्व्रतानि पश्चात्र पञ्चैवोपव्रतानि च ॥

Manu has indeed ordained *Dharma* for the guidance of men of the four stages of life as possessing the above ten characteristics in common with all of them. The *Sannyāsin*, besides the above has five additional austerities and five subordinate ones to perform.

आचारशुद्धिर्नियमः शौचञ्च प्रतिकर्म च ।
सम्यग्दर्शनमित्येवं पञ्चैवोपव्रतान्यपि ॥

The purification of customary observances, self-imposed vows, requital of service to others and right understanding,—these are called the five subordinate austerities.

ध्यानं समाधिर्मनसेन्द्रियाणां सनागरैर्भैक्ष्यमथो-
पगम्य ।
मौनं पवित्रोपचितेर्विमुक्तिः परिव्राज्ये धर्ममिमं
चदन्ति ॥

Meditation, concentrating the mind with the senses from their objects, resorting to the villagers for alms, silence, renunciation of all attachments in view of the accumulation of purity,—these five are binding duties on the *Sannyāsin*.

सर्वे ते श्रेयसे प्रोक्ता आश्रमा ब्रह्मणा स्वयम् ।
सत्यार्जवन्तपः क्षान्तिर्योगेज्यादम पूर्विका ।
वेदाःसाङ्गाश्च यज्ञाश्च व्रतानिनियमाश्चये ।
न सिध्यन्ति प्रदुष्टस्य भावदोष उपागते ॥

All these four *Ashramas* (stages) have been ordained by Brahmā himself for mankind as a means to attain beatitude. But without purity of motive one cannot gain perfection even if one practises truth, sincerity, austerity, forbearance, Yoga and worship, or studies the Vedas complete in its six *angas* (auxiliary members) or performs

बहिः कर्माणि सर्वाणि न सिध्यन्ति कदाचन ।
अन्तर्भावप्रदुष्टस्य कुर्वतोऽपि पराक्रमात् ॥

सर्वस्वमपि यो दद्यात् कलुषेनान्तरात्मना ।
न तेन धर्मभाक् स स्याद्भाव एवात्र कारणम् ॥

* * * *

योगिनाममृतं स्थानं नानाधीनां न विद्यते ।
स्थानान्याश्रमिणां तानि ये स्वधर्मे व्यवस्थिताः ॥

sacrificial rites and prescribed or self-imposed vows. Even if he whose inner motive is corrupt, forcibly performs all the above virtues, neither they nor his external meritorious acts secure success or perfection for him.

Even if a man gives away in charity everything he has, but with his inner soul impure, he cannot through that partake of the merits of his religious acts, for, the purification of the soul is the only condition for acquiring virtue.

* * * *

The Yogis attain to the highest sphere of immortality; those whose minds are scattered in various ways,—for them there are no higher planes. These are assigned only for those who go through the four *Ashramas* by firmly following the respective duties of their stations in life.

GLEANINGS FROM THE SIKH GURUS

ONE, self-existent, Himself the creator, O
Nanak! one continueth, another never was
and never will be.

Nanak, Adi Granth.

Pothis, Smritis, Vedas, Puranas,
Are all as nothing, if unleavened by God,

Nanak, Adi Granth.

God will not ask man of his birth,
He will ask him what has he done.

Nanak, Adi Granth.

Of the impure among the noblest,
Heed not the injunction;
Of one pure among the most despised,
Nanak will become the footstool.

Nanak, Adi Granth.

I will make the four races of one colour,
I will cause them to remember the words
“Wah Guru”

Govind in the *Rehet Nameh*
(Letter of Rules).

The cotton should be mercy, the thread
contentedness, and the seven knots virtue.
If there is such ‘Juneo’ of the heart, wear it;
It will neither break, nor burn, nor decay, nor
become impure.

O Nanak! he who wears such a thread is to
be numbered with the holy.

Nanak, Adi Granth.

He is of the Khalsa,
Who speaks evil to none,
Who combats in the van,
Who gives in charity,
Who slays the enemy,
Who subdues his passions,
Who burns ‘Karma,’
Who does not yield to superstitions,
Who is awake day and night,
Who delights in the sayings of the Gurus,
And who never fears, although often overcome,
Considering all as created by the Lord,
Give offence to none, otherwise the Lord will
himself be offended.

He is of the Khalsa,
Who protects the poor,
Who combats evil,
Who remembers God,
Who achieves greatness,
Who is intent upon the Lord,
Who is wholly unfettered,
Who mounts the war-horse,
Who is ever waging battle,
Who is continually armed,
Who slays the enemy,
Who extends the faith,
And who gives his head with what is upon it.
The name of God shall be proclaimed;
No one shall speak against Him;
The rivers and the mountains shall remember
Him;

All who call upon Him shall be saved.

Govind, *Tunkha Nameh*
(Letter of Restrictions).

UNIVERSALITY OF THE VEDANTA RELIGION

Swami Abhedananda delivered an interesting and instructive lecture on the "Universality of the Vedanta religion," on the day following his arrival in Madras.

Rao Bahadur M. Audinarayaniah was in the chair.

Swami Abhedananda, in rising to address the large assembly numbering between four and five thousand, once more thanked them for their hearty welcome and fine demonstrations of warm enthusiasm and love they had shown for him, spoke to the following effect:—

It is extremely gratifying to me to know that you care more for your religion, for spirituality than for anything else. All other subjects, such as politics and social progress, are secondary to us Hindus, and spirituality is our life. It is a part of our soul. We cannot give it up. The moment we give it up, we will be dead. From time immemorial, from the day when all the Anglo-Saxon and European nations were tattooing their bodies and eating raw animal flesh, from that hoary age down to the present day, our treasure and wealth is in spirituality and not in politics or in social reform.

The religion and philosophy that we have inherited from our ancient forefathers, *Mantra Drashtās*, the seers of truth, is absolutely universal. It does not take its stand upon the quick-sand of doctrines and dogmas but upon the solid bed-rock of eternal truths and spiritual laws that govern our souls from eternity to eternity; and standing upon this solid foundation, our religion and philosophy has withstood all the ravages of time and has been able to conquer all other kinds of movements that have sprung up from time to time. Our religion and philosophy has civilised the nations of different countries, whether of Asia, or of Europe, whether directly or indirectly. Spiritual ideals of the highest nature first arose from the heart of India, and then travelled Westward and Eastward—Westward as far as Alexandria and Greece and Eastward as far as China. Even centuries before the Christian Era the great preachers of Hindu philosophy and religion went out of India to distant lands to preach the gospel of truth. They never

carried swords or guns, but they spread and scattered good-will and peace and love wherever they went. The spirituality which we have inherited through our wonderful religion and philosophy is known under the name of *Vedanta*.

By *Vedanta* many people may think that it means certain sectarian philosophy or some metaphysical dogmas which are purely monistic or dualistic, and consequently one-sided. The term *Vedanta* is not limited by any sectarian doctrine or dogma or any metaphysical theory. Vedanta means the end of wisdom. It is not limited to any particular book or writing or scripture, but it is absolute in its nature. What is that end of wisdom, and how to acquire it is the aim of the Vedantin primarily. The end of wisdom must not mislead us to any such conclusion that wisdom can be limited or can be made final. The idea is that the end of wisdom means that goal which is reached by all relative knowledge, by all knowledge which proceeds from the phenomenal world or from our sense of perception. Knowledge which is scientific is only striving to reach that climax to which it will never go. And where is that climax? Is it in the knowledge of matter, or in the external phenomenal world? No, matter is the combination of material particles known as the phenomenal world, which means one half of the Universe. There is another half which is not matter, but which is the knower of matter. It is not the same as the combination of material particles, but it is the knower, the power, the intelligence by which we are conscious of the external conditions. We can perceive the existence of matter and we can know that there is such a thing as the phenomenal universe or the external world, which is merely objective and that is one-half of the universe. The other half is subjective, and when we combine the knowledge of the objective world and that of the subjective world, then we find a grand wisdom which is unlimited by time and space and that wisdom may be called Divine wisdom or eternal wisdom. That unlimited wisdom is the beginning and end of the whole Universe. Where is that Wisdom? It is in the Universe. Is it outside this cosmos? Is it outside our bodies?

No! It pervades the Universe. It is outside as also inside. It is everywhere. We have wisdom itself in our souls. In fact, our souls are but manifestations of that infinite wisdom which is the foundation and the end of all phenomenal existences.

This wisdom is described by various names and some personify and call it the Lord of the Universe, but makes this wisdom as one of His principal attributes. Omniscience is the attribute of the Soul, but is the Soul separate from omniscience? No. He is one with omniscience. He is one with Divine wisdom. Therefore the religion and philosophy of the teachers of Vedanta is that existence and intelligence are one and the same. They are inseparable, and therefore, absolute existence and intelligence must be the foundation of this whole Universe; and therefore, it is called *Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahman*. *Satyam* means absolute existence. *Jnanam* means knowledge which is beginningless or endless and that is what is described in Vedanta as *Brahman*, the infinite Being, the supreme Being of the Universe, and that *Brahman* is nameless and formless. It is one. It cannot be many. It is also said in the Vedas that this one infinite intelligence and existence is the source of all phenomenal universe. A question was asked in the Vedic Age, what is the nature of that eternal truth of the supreme Being and how is it related to the phenomenal world. That question was answered by another sage in the *Deva Bhāshā* or the Sanskrit language. Its translation is this: "That from which the whole phenomenal world, the universe has come into existence, by which it exists, through which it continues to live and unto which it returns at the time of dissolution, know that. That is *Brahman*." Therefore Brahman is the beginning, middle and end of all relative existences. That absolute Being is also the ideal of all the great philosophers of different countries. It is called by different names. Plato called it the good. Herbert Spencer called it "The unknown and the unknowable," and other philosophers like Emerson called it "Oversoul." A great Chinese philosopher called it the eternal Being, the nameless and formless infinite wisdom which is the beginning and end of the phenomenal existence, and that infinite wisdom is the goal of all relative knowledge, and that is the ideal of Vedanta. It tells us how that goal can be reached. And what happens when that goal is

realised. The ideal Being one and the same it tells us that the same infinite wisdom, whether we call it personal or impersonal, whether we call it the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer, it makes no difference, is one and the same.

If we understand that it has no particular name, then we have no difficulty in reconciling this ideal with the ideals of sectarian religions like Christianity, Mahomedanism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, and other "isms" of the world. If we understand the nature of that infinite Being as nameless, then we may say that it is Brahman of the Hindus, Vishnu of the Vaishnavites, Siva of the Sivaites, Sakti of the Sāktas. It is also the Father in Heaven of the Christians and the Allah of the Mahomedans, Jehovah of the Jews and so on. The difference is only in name. But these different names do not change the nature of that absolute wisdom, the Divine Being, the Supreme Lord of the Universe, and therefore all religious quarrel and persecution that have been described in the pages of the religious history of the world, should not exist in future if we understand that Unity in diversity is the ideal of our existence. The unity of god-head under a variety of manifestations that has names and forms;—if we realise that, then there would be no more quarrel, no more fight between the Hindus and the Mahomedans, Christians and Mussulmans, Hindus and Christians and other followers of various sects. All these quarrels and fights proceed from ignorance, and fanaticism is the child of ignorance. Wherever there is ignorance there is fanaticism, and fanaticism leads to all kinds of diabolical methods which deluged the world under the name of religion. Christians have held swords and guns in their hands and demolished temples in this country and Ceylon. They have demolished Buddhist temples in Japan and China. Mahomedans have demolished the Hindu temples through fanaticism and through that spirit of zeal to propagate their faith, but the Hindus have always practised toleration. They have never held swords and destroyed any religious monument for the sake of their faith. Show me a nation like the Hindu nation who built churches for the Christians and mosques for the Mahomedans! Why did they do so? Because they know that the Lord who is worshipped under the name of Allah or the Father in Heaven is the same deity whom they worship under different

names. The toleration of the Hindus had been unique in the religious history of the world. We have never shed blood in the name of religion. We understand better, and therefore the Hindu nation is still capable of being the spiritual leaders and teachers of the Western nations. They are yet to learn from the Hindus the grandeur of religious toleration. Hinduism accepts the fundamental principles of all religions. It is very difficult to reconcile so many varieties of creeds with the religion and philosophy of Vedanta, but, if you look a little deeper, you will see the religion and philosophy of Vedanta does not deal with doctrines and dogmas, but it gives spiritual laws which are eternal and universal and which are the common property of all religions. And what are those spiritual laws, the ethical laws, the relation between the soul and God, the relation between the individual soul and the external world? All these are most beautifully described, most rationally maintained by no other system than the system of Vedanta which is not only a philosophy but also a religion.

Now, the religion and philosophy of Vedanta can be divided into three principal parts. One part is dualistic. By that word I mean, it admits the existence of three entities as separate, but closely related to one another. The existence of the individual soul, of the external nature and of the creator;—these three are co-eternal entities. These exist but they are not one and the same. Those who admit these three things as separate entities are known as dualistic. Among the Hindus you will find the Vaishnavites admit that the Lord is separate from nature as also from the individual souls, but among the Western nations those who proclaim Judaism, Mahomedanism, Christianity, etc., you will find the majority of these followers believe that the Lord of the Universe is separate from the Universe, and He is the ruler and the governor of the Universe. The Creator is distinct and separate from the individual souls which are His creatures. This is the first step in the spiritual evolution of the soul. First of all when we see beautiful things which we perceive by the senses, then we conceive of a creator and a ruler and governor and we think of His attributes, His powers and His majesty and then we bow down to Him and worship Him. In times of distress and suffering we

pray to Him and call for His help. That is only natural. Then, gradually we begin to feel that the Lord of the Universe whom we conceive as dwelling beyond our reach is not far from us. He manifests Himself within our souls, as an internal ruler and comforter within ourselves.

Then we feel we are not separate from Him but more closely connected with Him in some mysterious manner. Our true nature is not absolutely separate. It is not a part inseparable from the whole; yet as a part is not the same as the whole, so we feel that our true spirits, our *atmans* are parts of the stupendous whole and yet not the same. This is the second stage of the spiritual evolution. It is called *Visishtâdwaita*. It means that we are in the body of the Supreme Being, and the whole external phenomenal world forms the gross physical body—*Virdtmoorti*, of that infinite wisdom, and each individual soul exists in the body of the Lord. Sometimes it remains there and at other times it manifests itself in various manifestations and incarnations.

Then there is another still closer realisation and that comes to the soul which has reached beyond the limits of all relative knowledge, sense-perceptions and thoughts and ideas. When we rise above all relative conceptions, we find that there is something which is the foundation of our conceptions of the Creator, the Preserver and Destroyer which forms the essence of the Lord whom we worship under different names. When we realise that, we enter into the domain of the absolute Existence. We are no longer conscious of external things and we feel a blissful state of *samâdhi* which is indescribable and there we find all differentiations vanish. The sun, moon and stars disappear. Where do they go? We do not know, but there exists one infinite Wisdom, and it is said in the Vedas that neither the light of the sun, nor that of the moon, nor that of the lightning can show the glory of that infinite Wisdom, which these external material lights cannot reveal. How can earthly light reveal that supreme Being? But at the same time it dwells in the sun, in the moon and in the stars as well. It is the essence of the lightning. No one can transcend it. It is indescribable, unfathomable, immortal; this state is called Monistic or *advaita*. Then we realise that these three, the individual souls, the external nature and the Creator

are but the manifestations of one absolute Wisdom which is infinite and eternal. In manifestations there is relativity. A creator exists so long as there is creation, but when there is no creation how can there be a creator. So is Iswara. What is its meaning? Iswara means ruler or governor. Now, can there be a governor when there is nothing to be governed. And how long does the governor exist? So long as there is something to be governed. So, so long as the phenomenal world exists, there is that manifestation which is called Iswara or personal God. But our God is not merely personal but still He is impersonal. Our conception of God as a personal deity is only a poor conception of God. That is only the beginning. We must rise higher and higher in the evolution of our conception of God and gradually we will find that this Iswara is only the first-born manifestation of something which is indescribable and infinite wisdom and that is *Brahman*. Now, under these three heads we can include all the special religions of the world, Christianity, Mahomedanism, Judaism, &c., which are dualistic, and therefore they can be embraced by the dualistic system of the religion and philosophy of Vedanta. Ramanujacharya described in his commentaries the grand truth that the first-born of the Lord of the Universe, Saguna Brahman is the Almighty Being in whose body dwells *chit* and *achit*, the individual ego and nature. This idea was expressed by Jesus Christ when he said that the great Lord is like the vine and we are but branches. It was expressed by Pope when he said, that the Lord is one stupendous whole, of which we are but parts. But when we go a little deeper we find He cannot be divided into parts, because He is infinite and every part of Him is infinite. Then comes, the most advanced metaphysics of Sankaracharya, who says that all these differentiations and distinctions are only on the phenomenal plane. The idea of separation, the idea of division, exists so long as we are limited by time, space and causation. Time, space and causation are but the products of one eternal energy which is known as *Prakriti* or *Maya*.

But what is Maya, I ask? Is it merely illusion? It means relative existence. It means time, space and causation. Sankaracharya defines it: Indescribable in its nature and name. It is the energy of that supreme wisdom, divinity, beginning-

less. It consists of three qualities or materials which combine themselves and manifest into gross material forms of the Universe. Its existence can only be inferred by seeing the results, and it is that which produced all phenomenal names and forms. Time, space and causation are included in that, because these are the conditions under which all names and forms exist. European philosophers think that Kant was the first to discover that time, space and causation are the conditions of phenomenal existence, but it was known to the Hindus long before the time of Kant. In fact, Sankaracharya mentioned that several times in his Commentary on the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras. It was familiar to the Hindus long before Kant declared it, from the time of Sankaracharya who lived about the eighth century A. D., and in fact, that idea was in a germ stage in the Upanishads which go back thousands and thousands of years before the Christian Era. We must not consider that Maya means absolute illusion. It means phenomenal existence, conditional existence. It means that my existence depends upon the existence of Madras. Madras exists so long as there is India and India exists so long as there is earth and the earth so long as there is the solar system. That is conditional existence and that existence is possible only in time, space and causation. But when we rise above time and space, when relativity vanishes, there is no *maya* nor manifestation of *maya* and there is the abode of infinite wisdom, and yet at the same time it forms the background; it forms like a canvas upon which the most beautiful picture of the phenomenal world is painted by the Almighty hand, and that canvas gives life and soul to the picture of the phenomenal world. Nothing can exist as separate from that infinite Being, and therefore we must feel our relation to the Infinite as inseparable, and this idea was expressed most beautifully by Christ when he said 'We live and move and have our being in God.' This idea was expressed in India centuries before his time. It is expressed in the Upanishads thus: That from which everything comes into existence, in which everything exists, into which everything returns. So our being depends upon the Supreme Being. This is the ideal goal of our religion as also of all the religions of the world.

Therefore, our religion embraces all other religions. For instance, the Vedas say that *moksha* is to be attained through knowledge. By knowing we can attain to absolute emancipation and freedom, and the same idea was given in the Bible when Christ said: "And ye shall know the truth and truth shall make you free." Christ there means that knowledge brings freedom. He did not mean the knowledge of any material object or of external matter, but the knowledge of that one Being which when realized would bring about external freedom. If you study the Koran you will find the knowledge of Allah is declared to be the means by which that goal of freedom can be attained. Of course, going to heaven and enjoying celestial pleasures is not considered to be the highest state of spiritual realisation. According to our Sanatana Dharma, although it advocates and helps such men who are anxious to reach the goal of celestial pleasures and does not discourage the devotee who wishes to go to heaven and enjoy the celestial pleasures for a certain length of time, yet it holds before us that these pleasures are within the realm of time, space and causation, and teaches us that those seekers after truth who wish to attain to the absolute Being, who endeavour to enter into the body of infinite Wisdom must transcend the celestial religion. Other religions do not give that ideal but give only celestial enjoyment as the highest pleasure. And therefore those special religions can never become universal, because they do not want to go beyond that limit of heavenly pleasures. If there be any one who does not care to go to heaven, these special religions cannot help that individual, but here is a religion which can help all those who wish to go to heaven and all those also who do not care to go to heaven, and therefore this religion is more universal than any other special religions.

Another point we must not forget, viz., that the universal religion of Vedanta which advocates the existence of one truth, one being and one wisdom, is not based on any theory which is like the theory of a special creation out of nothing. But it is purely rational. It is in perfect harmony with reason, science and philosophy. As the modern scientists after long research and investigation have arrived at the conclusion that this world was not created in six days out of nothing, but is the result, the

gradual evolution of the eternal energy which is all pervading, which remains unmanifested at certain times and then manifests itself into various names and forms. The evolution theory has been discovered by modern thinkers through long researches and investigation. The ancient thinkers of India discovered the same law of evolution and based their religion upon that law and rejected the theory of special creation of the world by any external deity, and therefore in the Vedas we read that something can never come out of nothing, and this is a scientific law discovered by modern scientists. Until lately this law was unknown to the scientists of Europe and America, but it was known in India centuries before the Christian Era. In Chhandogya Upanishad whose date has not yet been fixed by the occidental thinkers, we read a father teaching his son saying how can something come out of nothing. That question was raised by the great *Mantra Drashti* of the Vedic period and it is raised to-day by the scientific thinker. And therefore the evolution theory has given foundation to the religion of Vedanta which is universal, and its universality consists in that harmony which exists between itself and all sciences and philosophies of the world. I shall now proceed to show you how the highest ideal of all the scientists of modern times is included within the pale of the Vedanta religion and therefore it is universal. The evolution theory gives foundation to the religion of Vedanta. At the same time we must not think that this theory explains all things. There are other theories which are higher than the evolution theory. Time will not permit me to enter into the details of that metaphysical point, but I can assure you that there is a theory which is better and more scientific than the theory of evolution, but the modern scientists of Europe do not accept it. Well has it been said by Sir Monier Williams that the Hindus were Spinozas before Spinoza. This is true, for as early as the time of Kapila, we find him explaining that theory in detail. The modern theory which is so beautifully explained by Herbert Spencer is not very dissimilar to that ideal theory of evolution which was started by Kapila at least seven centuries before the Christian Era. He may be called the Herbert Spencer of Ancient India. And thus we find that all the scientific thoughts and discoveries

are helping and sustaining the religion and philosophy of Vedanta. But what has become of the other special religions which were built upon the theory of special creation. They take this for granted. They believe in traditions and are afraid of asking question. If any one ask a question, such as, why did God create the earth before the sun, the answer is not given, and the preacher says it is blasphemous to ask such questions, and that most inscrutable are the ways of the Almighty and He can do anything. Such explanations do not satisfy scientific minds, and therefore they do not accept such theories but ridicule them. In our religion of Vedanta nothing can be ridiculed.

Another point which we must remember before we can understand the universality of Vedanta, is this. It has never had any founder. A religion which needs a founder or which is built upon the personality of a founder cannot exist beyond his life and therefore cannot be universal, and if the founder be one-sided it can never be unlimited. It may satisfy certain souls but not all, and for that reason we find so many religions existing in this world. Mahomedanism tried to convert the whole world. Christianity has been trying for the last 2,000 years. But has it succeeded? We doubt it. It may try another 4,000 years. We live in eternity, we do not care. Our life is not limited by three or four scores of years but we are children of immortal bliss. We are not afraid of hell-fire after death, and there is in addition on our side the fact that we are not going to eternal perdition. I was coming from England to India in a P. and O. Steamer. There was a passenger who travelled with me and was interested in the missionary work, and he thought I was a Christian missionary. So he asked me to what denomination I belonged. I said, "To no denomination." It was very surprising to him. He said, "Don't you believe in Christ?" "Certainly I do," was my reply. Then he asked, "Do you believe he is the Saviour?" I said, "He is one of the Saviours. Mahommed was a saviour, Christ was a saviour and there are many others." He then asked "Do you believe that you are a sinner? He will save you and through him you will receive salvation." I said, "I do not believe that." "Don't you?" he asked. I said, "No." He then said, "You are the first man I have seen that has the courage to say so." I said, "Yes! we have the

courage to say so, because we know it." He then said, "Well, it is very strange. Time will come when you will believe that you are a sinner." I said, "I am a child of God, and to call me a sinner is blasphemy, and if you call me so you commit a sin yourself." He said, "I have never seen such a man." I said, "You see me and I will show you thousands if you go with me." He then changed the subject.

So, my friends, our religion gives us that strength that we do not fear eternal hell-fire, because it does not belong to us. We are the children of immortal bliss. This must be preached in all countries of the world, where they are groaning under the burden of that blasphemous thought that they are born in sin and iniquity and we must remove that by spreading the religion of Vedanta. Awake, arise and take the banner of this universal religion and go from land to land and preach the gospel of truth, to enlighten the minds of thousands and millions of men who are waiting to receive you as their own saviours. Such is the grandeur of the universal religion of Vedanta and its various methods. It does not say that everybody should believe in one particular creed, but on the contrary it says that each individual will have his own particular line of thought and each will lead to that ultimate goal. Christianity, Mahomedanism, Vaishnavism, Sivaism and Sâktamârگا—they are all so many paths each leading to the one goal. If we realise that, then there will be no fight, no persecution but absolute peace and harmony. The follower of the Vedanta religion is neither a Hindu, Mahomedan, Christian, Parsi or any other. He can worship in a Church, in a mosque, in a temple or in his own heart, because our human body is the temple of the living God, is the Church of the Almighty Father and there the eternal Spirit shall be worshipped by spirit and in spirit and then we shall worship the true God. Then, we shall be able to say and know the truth of the great saying, which Sri Krishna made known to the world nearly two thousand years before the Christian Era:—

"Whoever comes to me from whatsoever path, I reach him. All religions reach the same goal which is the infinite and absolute existence, intelligence, bliss and love."

With usual vote of thanks the meeting dispersed.

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THE MASTER AS I SAW HIM

BEING PAGES FROM THE LIFE OF THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BY HIS DISCIPLE, NIVEDITA.

VII.

THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE
ORDER OF RAMAKRISHNA

BUT it was not the Swami alone whom we saw at Belur. We were accounted by the monastery as a whole, as its guests. So back and forth would toil the hospitable monks, on errands of kindness and service for us. They milked the cow that gave us our supply, and when the servant whose duty it was at nightfall to carry the milk, was frightened by the sight of a cobra in the path, and refused to go again, it was one of the monks themselves who took his place in this humble office. Some novice would be deputed daily to deal with the strange problems of our Indian house-keeping. Another was appointed to give Bengali lessons. Visits of ceremony and of kindness were frequently paid us by the older members of the community. And finally, when the Swami Vivekananda himself was absent for some weeks on a journey, his place was always duly taken at the morning tea table by some one or another who felt responsible for the happiness and entertainment of his guests. And in these and a thousand similar ways, we came in touch with those who could reveal to us the shining memory that formed the warp on which as woof were woven all these lives of renunciation.

For they had only one theme, these monastic visitants of ours, and that was their Master Sri Ramakrishna and his great disciple. The Swami had now been back with them for thirteen or fourteen months only, and scarcely yet had they recovered from their first pleasure and surprise. For before that he had been practically lost to them for some six years. It was true that of late he had corresponded with them freely, and that for no time had they been, for long, altogether off his track. And yet, when his first success in America had been heard of, most of his brethren had had only their con-

fidence in the great mission foretold by his Master, to tell them that it was he.

Those who have witnessed here or there some great life of asceticism, will recognise a mood of passionate longing to lose one's own identity, to be united with the lowliest and most hidden things, to go forth from amongst men, and be no more remembered by them, as an element in the impulse of renunciation. This it is which explains, as I think, the long silence and seclusion in caves, the garb of mud and ashes, so often worn as a man wanders from forest to forest, and village to village, and a thousand other features of this type of religion which to the Western onlooker might seem inexplicable. This mood would seem to have been much with the Swami in the early years after the passing of his Master. And again and again he must have left the little band of brethren, in the hope never to be heard of more. Once he was brought back from such an expedition by the community itself, who heard that he was lying ill at a place called Hathras, and sent to take him home. For such was the love that bound them all to each other, and especially to him, that they could not rest without nursing him themselves. A few months later he was followed to the monastery by a disciple whom he had called to himself during his wanderings. This man's name, in religion, was Sadananda, and from his account, with its strong broken English, I glean the record of the life that was lived at this period in the monastery. When he arrived—it had taken him some two or three months, by means of railway service, to earn his way to Calcutta from his old home—he found the Swami on the point of setting out once more. But for his sake this journey was abandoned, and the departure that was to have taken place that evening did not occur till twelve months later. "The Swami's mission began with me," says this first disciple proudly, referring to this time.

During this year, he, the Master, "would work twenty-four hours at a time. He was lunatic-like, he was so busy." Early in the morning, while it was still dark, he would rise and call the others, singing, "Awake! Awake! all ye who would drink of the divine nectar!" Then all would proceed to meditation, afterwards drifting almost unconsciously into singing and talking, which would last till noon, or even later. From hymns and chanting they would pass into history. Sometimes it would be the story of Ignatius Loyola; again Joan of Arc or the Rani of Jhansi; and yet again the Swami would recite long passages from Carlyle's French Revolution, and they would all sway themselves backwards and forwards dreamily, repeating together "Vive la République! Vive la République!" Or the subject of their reveries might be S. Francis of Assisi, and with the same unconscious instinct of the dramatist, they would lose themselves in an endless identification with his "Welcome, Sister Death!" It might perhaps be one or two o'clock when Ramakrishnananda—cook, housekeeper, and ritualist of the community—would drive them all, with threats, to bathe and eat. But after this, they would "again group"—again would go on the song and talk, till at last evening had come, bringing with it the time for the two hours of *Arati* to Sri Ramakrishna. As often as not, even this would scarcely break the absorption, again would follow song and talk of the Master; again would come the trances of meditation. Or on the roof, till long after midnight it might be, they would sit and chant "Hail Sita-Rama!" The special festivals of all religions brought each their special forms of celebration. At Christmas time, for instance, they would recline with long shepherds' crooks, around a lighted log, and talk in low tones of the coming of the angels to the lonely watchers by their flocks, and the singing of the world's first Gloria. Very curious is the story of how they kept Good Friday. Hour after hour had gone by, and they had risen gradually to that terrible exaltation of spirit which comes to those who give themselves to the day. Food was not to be thought of, but they had contrived to have by them a few grapes, and the juice was squeezed out, and mixed with water, to be drunk out of a single cup by all. In the midst of such scenes, the voice of a European was heard at the door, calling on them, in the name of Christ. With

inexpressible delight they swarmed down on him, twelve or fifteen men of them, eager to hear of the day from the lips of a Christian. "—But he said he belonged to the Salvation Army, and knew nothing about Good Friday. They only kept General Booth's birthday, and something else, I forget what" said Sadananda, and in the cloud that overcast the face and voice of the teller, one could realize the sudden depression that fell, at this discovery, upon the monks. It seems that in their first disappointment, they snatched his Bible from the unfortunate missionary, saying he was not worthy to possess it, and drove him forth. It is said however that one of their number stole round by another door and brought him back to eat and have his property secretly restored to him.

"Those were hot days," said the teller of the tale, with his face aglow, "there was no minute of rest." Outsiders came and went, pundits argued and discussed. But, he, the Swami, was never for one moment idle, never dull. Sometimes he was left alone for a while, and he would walk up and down, saying, 'Hari bol! bol! bol! Call on the Lord! Call! Call!' or 'Oh Mother!' in all these ways preparing himself for his great work. And I watched all the time from a distance, and in some interval said, 'Sir, will you not eat?'—always to be answered playfully. Sometimes the talk took place while cooking was going on, or during the service of the altar, offices in which all shared without distinction. For in spite of the poverty of those days, many came to the monks to be fed. Their own resources were scanty. They had only one piece of cloth amongst them that was good enough to be worn across the shoulders, outside the monastery. So this was kept on a line and used by anyone who went out. And they could afford no more. Yet food was found somehow for the poor and for guests, and many came for help or teaching. And they begged funds enough also, to buy and distribute some hundreds of copies of the Bhagavad Gita, and the Imitation, the two favourite books of the Order at that time. "Silence, all ye teachers! And silence, ye prophets! O Lord, speak Thou alone unto my soul!" was, years after, a sentence that the Swami quoted at a venture as all that he then remembered of Thomas à Kempis. For it is perhaps needless to say that while this book took its place by degrees amongst

experiences remembered, the Gita grew every day in fulness of power and beauty in the minds of these Hindu children of Ramakrishna.

So passed some twelve months. Then the Swami went away to Ghazipur to visit Pavhari Baba,* that saint whom he always held second only to Ramakrishna. He came back in a couple of months to share the treasure he had gained with others. Suddenly news came that one of the brothers, by name Yogananda, was lying ill with small-pox at Allahabad, and a party, followed by the Swami, started to nurse him.

At Allahabad, to take up once more Sadananda's account, many days were passed in religious education. It was as if Yogananda's sickness had been a mere incident, a call given through him, and the whole town came and went in a great stirring. Small groups would come and go in a constant succession for days and nights together, the Swami being always in his highest and greatest mood. On one occasion he saw a Mohammedan saint, a Paramahansa "whose every line and curve told that he was a Paramahansa," and this was the occasion of a great hour.

"Sometimes naked, sometimes mad,
Now as a great scholar, again as a fool,
Here a rebel, there a saint,

Thus they appear on the earth, the Paramahansas."
—So, repeating "The Marks of Paramahansas" from the *Viveka Chudamani* of Sankaracharya, there passed, as the disciple would put it, "a whole night fermenting." Such experiences lasted perhaps for two weeks, and then the party left Allahabad and by twos and threes returned to the monastery, in the village of Baranagore, on the banks of the Ganges. But now there came a time, in the year 1890, when the Swami left his brothers, not to return till the great triumph of the year 1897.

This time he set out with a monk known as Akhandananda, who took him to Almora and left him there, enjoying the hospitality of a family who had formerly befriended himself on a journey to Thibet. It is said that on the way up the mountains, the Swami one day fainted with hunger, when a poor Mohammedan found him, and prepared and

gave him a cucumber, which practically saved his life. How long the brothers had been without food I do not know. It may have been that at this time, as certainly later, he was under the vow to ask for nothing, but wait always for food and drink till they were offered. He told some one who knew him during that period and questioned him, that the longest time he had ever gone without food, under this austerity, was five days.

After this, the thread of his wanderings was lost. He wrote occasionally, but the monks themselves were scattered. 'It had been so dull,' after they lost him, says the same narrator as before. And even the first home had to be abandoned, for the landlord talked of rebuilding. There was one monk, however, Ramakrishnananda by name, who would not leave the ashes of their Master, but vowed, with rock-like determination, to keep a roof overhead, come storm, come shine, so to speak, for them and for his brothers, till they should all foregather in their worship-room once more. He, then, with Nirmalananda, the occasional residence of one Premananda, and the new member of the fold, as dish-washer, removed to a house some distance away, but still in the immediate neighbourhood of Dakshineswar, and the monastery which had previously been at Baranagore was now known as the Alum Bazar Math.

Akhandananda at this time was always "chasing," always in pursuit of the absent leader. Every now and then he would hear of him in some town, and would arrive there, only in time to hear that he was gone, leaving no trace. Once the Swami Trigunatita found himself in trouble in a Guzerati state, when some one said that a Bengali *Sadhu* was staying with the Prime Minister, and if he appealed to him, would surely give him aid. He made his appeal, and found that the unknown *Sadhu* was the Swami himself. But he, after rendering the assistance that was needed, sent his brother onwards, and himself proceeded alone. The great words of Buddha which always meant so much to him, "Like unto the lion, not trembling at noises, like unto the wind, not caught in a net, like unto the lotus leaf untouched by the water, so do thou wander alone, like the rhinoceros!" were assuredly the motto of his life at this time.

It had been at Almora, as we now know, that news of the death, in pitiful extremity, of the

* See Swami Vivekananda's article on the life of Pavhari Baba in the January, March and June issues of *Prabuddha Bharata*, Vol. IV, 1899.—Ed.

favourite sister of his childhood reached him, and he had fled into the wilder mountains, leaving no clue. To one who, years after, saw deep into his personal experience, it seemed that this death had inflicted on the Swami's heart a wound, whose quivering pain had never for one moment ceased. And might perhaps venture to trace some part at least of his burning desire for the education and development of Indian women, to this sorrow.

At this time he passed some months in a cave overhanging a mountain-village. Only twice have I known him to allude to this experience. Once he said, "Nothing in my whole life ever so filled me with the sense of work to be done. It was as if I were *thrown* out from that life in caves to wander to and fro in the plains below." And again he said to some one, "It is not the form of his life that makes a *Sadhu*. For it is possible to sit in a cave and have one's whole mind filled with the question of how many pieces of bread will be brought to one for supper!"

It was perhaps at the end of this period, and in expression of that propulsive energy of which he spoke, that he made a vow to worship the Mother at Cape Comorin. In carrying this out, he was lavish of time, yet it must have taken him only about two years to accomplish the vow. In the course of his wanderings towards this end, he seems to have touched upon and studied every phase of Indian life. The stories of this period are never ended. The list of the friends he made is never full. He received the initiation of the Sikhs; studied the *Mimânsâ* Philosophy with Mahratta pundits; and the Jain Scriptures with Jains; was accepted as their *Guru* by Rajput princes; lived for weeks with a family of sweepers, in Central India; was able to observe at first hand such obscure questions as the caste-customs of Malabar; saw many of the historic sights and natural beauties of his Mother-land, and finally reached Cape Comorin too poor to pay for a seat in a ferry-boat to the shrine of Kanya Kumari, and swam across the strait to the island, in spite of sharks, to offer the worship he had vowed. It was on his return northwards through Madras, that he formed the strong group of disciples who became the means of sending him to America, for which country he sailed finally from Bombay, about the beginning of June 1893.

Even this however he was not eager to do. His disciples in Madras still tell how the first five hundred rupees collected for the object were immediately spent by him in worship and charity, as if he would *force* on his own destiny, as it were, the task of driving him forth. Even when he reached Bombay, he was still waiting for the feeling of certainty. Struggling to refuse the undertaking, he felt as if the form of his own Master appeared to him constantly, and urged him to go. At last he wrote secretly to Sarada Devi, the widow of Sri Ramakrishna, begging her, if she could, to advise and bless him, and charging her to tell no one of this new departure, till she should hear from him again. It was only after receiving, in answer to this letter, her warm encouragement, and the assurance of her prayers, that he actually left India for the West. Now, at last, there was no escaping fate. That same quest of forgotten-ness that had first borne him out of the doors of the monastery, had led him also to change his name in each Indian village that he reached. And in later years some one heard from him how, after his first great speech at Chicago, the mingling of the bitterness of this defeat with the cup of his triumphant achievement, racked his consciousness all night long. He stood now in the glare of publicity. The unknown beggar could remain unknown no more!

THE WATER-LILIES

When Evening's eyes are closing fast,
And weary winds have slept at last,
Upon the lake's translucent breast,
The snow-white lilies droop to rest.
But when the smiling Sun at play,
Has chased the morning mists away,
'Tis then the lilies leave their beds,
And nod their gold and snow-crowned heads.
O thus, when clouds of doubts arise,
And Passion's winds are stilled with sighs,
Within my heart's unfathomed deep,
My gentlest thoughts are laid asleep.
But when my shining God Above,
Begins to smile, in Grace and Love:
O then my thoughts burst thro' their gloom,
And like the lilies brightly bloom.

M. G. V.

REVIEW

INDIA AND HER PEOPLE. By Swami Abhedananda, published by the Vedanta Society of New York, 1906. 5¼" x 7¾", Pp. 285. †

We desire to call the attention of our readers to the above book, which consists of a course of six lectures, delivered by Swami Abhedananda in April last, before the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences. An additional chapter devoted to "Woman's Place in Hindu Religion," has also been added by him. We think that a great many persons besides the members to whom these lectures were originally addressed, will be grateful for their publication. It is a work that should be in the hands of everyone interested in India, as it is full of a vast amount of varied matter, and of important information relating to the philosophy, manners and customs of our country. The Swami states that, "India has always been the fountain-head of every system of philosophy, and the home of all the religious thought of the world. The majority of oriental scholars, like Professor Max Müller and Professor Paul Denssen, as also advanced students in America, have now come to realize that from ancient times India has produced a nation of philosophers, and that all the phases of philosophic thought, whether ancient or modern, can still be found there to-day. Among the six schools, the Vedanta philosophy has reached the highest pinnacle of philosophic thought which the human mind can possibly attain." "True philosophy in the widest sense must perform three great functions. First, it must co-ordinate the ultimate results arrived at by special branches of knowledge which we call sciences, and, taking up these conclusions, it must form the widest generalizations possible. Secondly,

true philosophy must investigate the realm of knowledge and trace its source. The third function which true philosophy performs is that of leading our minds into the realm of the Absolute, of the Unknown, and then it solves the problems of life and death. It explains the origin of the universe and of individual existence and the purpose of evolution. On the plane of relativity the perfect solution of these vital problems can never be found. No philosophy in the world performs these three functions so satisfactorily as Vedanta. Hence we may say that Vedanta is the most complete of all systems."

The Swami's remarks on the social status of the Indian People, are distinctly progressive. He says, "India needs social reorganization and social regeneration. Now the time has come for the Hindu leaders of society to stand on a broader and more universal platform and reconstruct their system, accepting whatever is good and noble among Western nations and adding it to their own lofty ideals. They will have to make their social organization more flexible than it has ever been. That reconstruction must be based upon the broadest and most universal ideals of the Hindu nation, tempered by the need of occidental aggressiveness and commercialism. The remedy has already been discovered in the all-embracing and unifying system of Vedanta, which, proclaiming the divine right of all humanity irrespective of caste, creed or colour, and teaching that all are children of God, whether Christians or Hindus, Pariahs or Brâhmanas, will once more purify the social conditions, remove the evils of the caste system, uplift the individuals, bring solidarity among the members of different communities, and make the Hindu nation stand once more as a great civilizing

† To be had of the Manager, Prabuddha Bharata, Price Rs. 3. (American price \$ 1. 25 cts).

power among the civilized nations of the world."

Amongst other things, he rightly gives prominence to the necessity of free education. He considers that, "India needs to day free education and free industrial and technical schools and colleges for the masses. India needs schools and colleges for the education of girls, not under the management of Christian missionaries, but under the management of the Hindus. India needs a national university where boys and girls will receive secular education free of charge, and where all technical and manual training can be obtained freely." "Hindu religion does not prevent any woman from receiving education; on the contrary, it says that it is the duty of the parents, brothers, and husbands to educate their daughters, sisters, and wives. So, if there be ignorance among Hindu women, it is not the fault of their religion, but rather of their poverty." Considerations of space do not permit of further extracts from this book. It is published for the purpose of disseminating an accurate account of the conditions of Hindu civilization and of correcting many misconceptions which have arisen in the West. A special interest in Swami Abhedananda's writing resides in the admirable presentment of the religious and social institutions of the Indian home.

It is no record of dull details, but an interpretation of Hindu principles, and an interesting chronicle of precisely those things which the Western student desires to know.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HOW WE TEACH THE PARIASH. By Mrs. N. A. Court-right, Supdt. of the Olcott Panchama Free Schools. Adyar, Madras. 39 pages. Price 2 annas each. Rs. 10 per 100.

SANKHYA YOGA—KARMA YOGA, of three lectures in Hindi, by Swami Sri Atmanandaji, on "Aryan philosophy," "Religious reform" and "Non-attachment" with explanatory notes in English. Published by Sri Jibansing Barma, Rajkot. 80 pages.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES

(GLEANED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)

If kept going, the wheels of a watch travel $3,558\frac{3}{4}$ miles in a year.

It is announced that a Mohammedan mosque will be built in London, probably in Bayswater road. The cost is estimated at £100,000. It is stated that the Mohammedan population of London is about 2,000.

MR. Herbert Spencer, shortly before his death, wrote to Dr. J. C. Bose in highly appreciative terms regarding his scientific work, the results of which that great philosopher was desirous of incorporating in his own writings.

IN one unbroken nocturnal flight the European bird known as the northern bluethroat, has been proved to travel from Central Africa to the German Ocean, a distance of 1,690 miles, making the journey in nine hours.

HIS HIGHNESS the Nizam of Hyderabad was lately taken seriously ill and like a genuine Oriental ruler has been feeding 15,000 poor men every day since his recovery. This benevolent ceremony went on for forty days and was over by the third week of September.

MR. Carl Vrooman, writing on his rambles in Switzerland, in the *Arena* for July, remarks on the fact that the Swiss territory is as free from beggars as Ireland from snakes. A friend on leaving a Swiss village handed the pastor fifty francs for his poor. The pastor replied, "We have no poor."

WE are glad to find in the *Mahratta* of 23rd September last a complete list of Joint-stock Companies, and Factories &c., started within India in one year 1905-1906, which number as many as forty-four. The capital of the thirty-eight among them comes up to Rs. 41,560,000, while of the other six the capital is not known.

THESE are, at present, seventeen sugar factories working by steam power in Bengal, and Upper and Southern India. Six or seven more are being added to the number of new erections this year.

DURING the month of July only, there have been registered no less than 27 Joint-stock Companies in British India, which may be grouped under such several classes as Banking including Insurance, Trading, Mills and Presses, Planting and sugar manufacturing companies. The nominal capital of these various companies amount to over 85 lakhs. All these are, no doubt, happy signs of the times.

As a result of great investigations, it is estimated that the depth of the rocky crust of the earth is 45 miles. And this agrees with Professor Milne's estimate based on a study of the speed of earthquake tremors. The temperature at the depth of 45 miles is estimated to be 15,008 C., the melting point of Iron, but below that of platinum, which is given as 17,108 C.

PROFESSOR Stanley Jevons, one of the greatest authorities on physical science, tells us that the ether of space 'is infinitely more solid and elastic than steel.' Another scientist estimates that this invisible substance exerts a pressure upon the earth of 'seventeen billion pounds per square inch.' 'Yet,' says Professor Jevons: 'We live and move without appreciable resistance, through this medium infinitely harder and more elastic than adamant.'—*The Coming Day, Sept. '06.*

GUIDO, being asked where he found the model for a great picture of a saint, called a poor old servant, worn and wrinkled and trouble-worn, and said, "Behold the man!" The master, skilled and wise, had seen the glory behind the veil, the saint behind the servant.

It is indeed consoling. What if God is at least as keen as Guido? What if there is a possible saint in every one of us! What if it needs only a master eye, a master-hand, to bring out that saint on some high day of grace! We are all very ignorant when we begin here, and have everything to learn, and life is full of snares, anxieties, sorrows, temptations, mixed with feverish joys; and the saint in us is there, at best, as a dream. But what if our struggles, our toils, our very failures, all help to evolve the saint?—*Light, London.*

AT a meeting of the Young Men's Christian Association, recently held in the Overton Hall, Calcutta, Mr. Satis Chandra Vidyabhusana, of the Presidency College, Calcutta, read an interesting paper on Indian missionaries to foreign lands in the Buddhist age. It appears that these missionaries led extremely ascetic lives. Being generally monks, they might not marry, would not touch gold or silver, did not drink wine, were not allowed to take more than one meal a day, to wear shoes, or to lie on high beds, and were otherwise bound by many severe rules and regulations of conduct and diet. Their mission was to conquer self for the emancipation of others. From the Nirvana of Buddha till the middle of the third century B. C., these missionaries confined their propaganda to India. But afterwards they extended their scope to other lands, until their gospel conquered the greater part of Asia.

THOSE who are familiar with Luther Burbank's great work with the making of new plants, as detailed in Prabuddha Bharata, September 1905, will be interested to know what he thinks of the effects of mixing races and improving human environment.

Taking America to illustrate his point he says:—

"We in America form a nation with the

bloods of half the peoples of the world in our veins. We are more crossed than any other nation in the history of the world, and here we meet the same results that are always seen in a much crossed race of plants. All the worst as well as all the best qualities of each are brought out in their fullest intensities. And right here is where selective environment counts. As time goes on, environment will crystallize the American nation. Its varying elements will become unified and the weeding out process will probably leave the finest human product ever known. What will hasten this development most of all? The proper rearing of children."

AT the Town Hall of Calcutta on the 17th of September, Sister Nivedita, who had lately been on a visit to famine districts in East Bengal, delivered an interesting address in connection with the famine and relief works.

After describing her experiences in East Bengal, the various places she visited and the many harrowing scenes she witnessed, Sister Nivedita said that even now they did not know how bad the famine was. Could they imagine such a state of things, they could have saved these poor people from such an inferno. She urged them to do all they could, even if it be pice and aunas, and to send half their own food, if nothing else, and not to enjoy food or clothing themselves until they have paid a tax to hunger and starvation for these helpless ones whose misery they could not imagine. She advised them to beg from door to door, to go into the European shops and beg. If they could send spinning wheels or cotton to be spun or even materials for labour, then they would give great help. In conclusion she said, there was one thing she wanted to point out to them. Did they realise what an awful waste one year of famine meant? It took thousands of years to build up a civilisation which could be shattered by one year of famine.

IN MEMORIAM

WE are grieved to learn that Raja Ravi Varma, of Travancore, a prince among both artists and aristocrats, died on the 2nd of October after suffering from a severe illness. The Raja was a genuine lover of the fine arts and master of the brush. His scenes taken mainly from Ramayana and Mahabharata, are the acme of perfection in the matter of both harmony and contrast of colour, as of expression.

IT is with the deepest sorrow and regret that we announce the passing away of Swami Swarupananda on the 27th of last June, at Nainital in the Himalayas. The Swami was a disciple of Swami Vivekananda and was a staunch and liberal-minded Vedantist. His love and reverence for his Master knew no bounds. He served the Ramakrishna Mission with singular faith and ceaseless devotion to the last day of his earthly existence. His loving nature, his noble renunciation, his strength of purpose and purity of character, combined with his keen and sharp intellect, endeared him to all who knew him even for a minute. The Ramakrishna Mission deeply deploras the loss of this earnest, sincere and devoted follower, and prays to the Almighty to give his soul eternal freedom, peace and rest.

—*Vedanta*, Sept. '06.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FAMINE RELIEF WORK

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FAMINE RELIEF FUND

	Rs.	As.	P.
Amount previously acknowledged ...	1030	8	3
Thro' Babu Haripada Dutt ...	6	0	0
" Babu Jagannath, Barabazar ...	50	0	0
" Brahmachari Ganendranath ...	5	0	0
" " Amulyacharan ...	4	0	0
" " Jnanendranath ...	5	0	0
" Babu Kedarnath Banerjee, Baruipur ...	4	0	0
" Dr. J. N. Kanjilal ...	11	0	0
" Swami Vimalananda, Madras ...	65	0	0
The "Bengali Office," (Thro' Babu Sachindranath Bose) ...	200	0	0
Sibtala Sadhana Samiti, (Thro' S. Chakraverty) ...	25	0	0
Bagbazar Reading Library, (Thro' Babu Monmohun Ganguli) ...	3	8	0
"Bande Mataram," (Thro' Swami Vimalananda) ...	10	0	0
Total Rs. ...	1419	0	3

	Rs.	As.	P.		Rs.	As.	P.
Brought forward	1419	0	3	Brought forward	2121	13	6
Hon'ble Babu K. Bhattacharan Pak Calcutta Thro' Hon'ble Babu Bhupendra Nana Bose	50	0	0	"Pro-famine"	21	0	0
Collected by the Brahmavalin Club, Alnanabad	25	0	0	do. (2nd instalment)	5	0	0
Collected by the Ramakrishna Anandhanthi Samiti, Sukra , Howrah	65	1	3	Mr. Sewell	1	0	0
Theodor Springmann, Jr. Esq., Hagen, Germany	115	0	0	" Walpert	10	0	0
Facinal Esq., Meerut, U. P.	5	0	0	" Mackay	5	0	0
Ram Natchand Bose, Kothar	20	0	0	" S. N. Subbaram, Madura	25	0	0
" Tulsi Ram Ghosh,	5	0	0	Dr. Eggersoll	3	0	0
" Babuamohan Bose, Sankari, Burdwan	20	0	0	" Ramlal Ghosh, Ramkrishnapur	5	0	0
" Lalumohan Dyt, Bagbazar	20	0	0	D. V. Sitaramiah Esq., Nayarampalli,	5	0	0
" Upendranath Mitra, Golabari Press	2	0	0	N. C. Mitra Esq., 24 purgs.	60	0	0
" Girish Ch. Ghosh, Bosepara	5	0	0	E. A. Mudalliar Esq., Namakal	5	0	0
" Harinarayana, Bombay	10	0	0	Kamil Tresnak Esq., Austria	61	12	0
" Kedarnath, Mozuffurnagore	5	0	0	" Krishnarpanam "	5	0	0
" Shyamacharan Mukherjee	5	0	0	Students, Oriental Seminary, 3rd Class, Sec. A.	7	4	0
" Sivachandra Bose, Howrah	5	0	0	The Vedanta Society, New York	110	8	0
" A. G. Sarma, Indore	15	0	0	The Girl School of Sister Nivedita	10	0	0
" Ramakrishna Bose, Kothar (in 3rd and 4th instalments)	110	0	0	Students' Douglas Boarding	4	2	6
" Mahitosh Mustafa, Bowbazar	2	0	0	Bowbazar Ramakrishna Society (2nd instalment)	2	10	6
" Atal Behari Maitra, Puri	5	0	0	B. N. Ry. Workshop, Shalimar,	2	0	0
" Durgaprasad Ghosh, Jessore	10	0	0				
" Jatindramohan Das, Dacca, (2nd instalment)	10	0	0	Total Rs.	2470	2	6
" Govinda Ch. Bhattacharya, Santragachi	20	0	0	To the above is added the surplus of the former famine relief fund of the Mission which amounted to Rupees	340	12	6
" Baikunthanath Sanyal (2nd instalment)	1	0	0				
" Ramdyal Chakraverty, do. do.	2	0	0	Grand total Rs.	2810	15	0
" Sasholinshan Laha, Calcutta	10	0	0	We learn that out of the above, Rs. 2650 has already been sent to our workers at Noakhali and Diamond Harbour.			
" Matilal Chatterjee, Bagbazar	1	0	0	We were also able to send to Noakhali, 31 pairs of new cloths given by Babu Jagannath of Barabazar, Calcutta, and a bundle of old cloths collected by Sister Nivedita. Twenty three old cloths and a bundle collected by several gentlemen of Calcutta, have been forwarded to Diamond Harbour. The Noakhali workers also received other cloths from Mymensing and various places.			
" Narayan Ch. Bose, Dinapur	4	0	0	From the foregoing it will be seen, that the balance left with us is too small to continue relief for any length of time unless more funds are forthcoming. It will indeed be a pity to have to stop work, when the distress is still acute and growing. Hence we earnestly appeal to any of our subscribers who wish to contribute to the fund, to do so without further delay.			
" Barendra Ch. Ghosh, Shampukur	5	0	0	[Through an error we published in our last report that our workers in the famine district expended Rs. 158, in the relief works at Charsiddhi Island, from the sum of Rs. 200, given by the Noakhali relief committee for that purpose. We now learn that the members of the Committee themselves distributed that amount whilst working conjointly with our representatives, who also spent Rs. 158 from the funds collected by our own Mission.—Ed.]			
" Kailas Ch. Ghatak, Bagbazar	0	8	0				
" Kiriti Bhushan Mukherjee, Rahaaru	14	1	0				
" Nagendranath Mitra, Tipperah	10	0	0				
" Bhagabatiprasad, Sitapur	1	0	0				
" Manoranjan Sen Gupta, Hazaribag	10	0	0				
" Jadupati Chatterjee, Siliguri (2nd instalment)	18	0	0				
" Adharlal Chandra & friends, Abiritola	4	0	0				
" Satyendranath Ghosh, Burdwan	5	0	0				
" Avinash Ch. Chatterjee	23	0	0				
" Giris Ch. Chowdhuri, Benares	8	0	0				
A friend	10	0	0				
A friend	0	5	0				
A friend	5	0	0				
A friend, Malda	6	0	0				
Srimati Kailaskamini Roy, Noakhali	10	0	0				
" Madhabmani Bose, Dinapore	1	0	0				
" Rajlakshmi Dasi, Calcutta	2	0	0				
" Charubala Devi Lashkar, C. I.	15	0	0				
" Indubala De, Barakpur	1	6	0				
" Swadeshi," Rangoon	6	14	0				
Total Rs.	2121	13	6				